



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## Book Reviews

---

### SCHOOLS AND SCHOLARS OF NIPPUR

The growing accumulation of ancient Babylonian tablets as a part of the museum equipment at various institutions makes the appearance of a volume of such texts a rather common occurrence. Still the number of centers where there are collections and facilities adequate to assure the regular production of such works can be enumerated on the fingers of the hand, and in this respect the Philadelphia Museum, so far, easily ranks first in this country. The output of the Babylonian Section of recent years fully keeps up this reputation.

A volume of ancient personal names has naturally about the same literary attractiveness as a modern hotel register. Dr. Edward Chiera's volume of personal names from Nippur (University of Pennsylvania, *The University Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section*, Vol. XI, 1916) furnishes a notable exception in this respect. Instead of being confronted by an endless list of names, the reader is introduced to what turns out to be a series of school exercises, in reality the ancient copy books of unbaked clay, which the pupils in the temple schools of Nippur used in learning to write Babylonian. There stands the teacher's model text, written with exactness and artistic finish, while beside it as on a double page appears the pupil's cramped and faulty reproduction. On the reverse of these tablets may be found the work of more advanced pupils who wrote without a model, but were still far from perfect in their art. The tablets also show that the beginners who wrote with model texts before them repeatedly erased their own side of the page by smoothing out or paring down the surface so as to utilize the teacher's exercise as many times as possible. These old exercise texts conjure up a scene that for vividness can only be compared with the vision that arises from the sight of a long lost "copy book" of childhood remembrance.

The material of these exercises constitutes the lists of personal names, and they are in themselves of unusual interest, giving as they do a classification of the names according to their linguistic affinities as made by the Babylonians themselves. The editor has arranged them in three groups, which thus constitute the three parts of the volume.

No. 1, "A Syllabary of Personal Names," contains 33 autographed plates of original material, followed by 4 photographic reproductions, illustrating the various kinds of school exercises. An introduction of 30 pages sets forth the essential problems and characteristics of the material.

The lists include an estimated roster of 1,082, but allowances made for lacunae curtail that number to 454, and weathering of the tablets still further reduces the total to 361 names that are complete or that can be completed with some degree of assurance. These are arranged in groups of three, so that each group has a distinctive common element, varying from a grammatical element to assonance in one syllable. The names vary as to language, Akkadian, Amorite, and Sumerian being certainly represented, but almost without exception the separate groups are of the same language. This entire arrangement, as pointed out by the editor, is unique in the case of such lists so far published.

That there is any set purpose on the part of the scribe to give samples of all name formations known to him is not clear, and we should hardly expect it from such exercises. No principle is observable in the order of the groups. Within the groups themselves there are only four clear cases where the common element is not initial. These exceptions may only be due to the fact that the scribe began a fresh group with a name that did not readily suggest another with the same initial element, while the last element proved especially easy to parallel. But immediately in the next group he fell back on his usual principle of putting the common element first. The rather numerous cases where the same initial element reappears in disconnected groups, when taken with the above, indicates the scribe's purpose to be the making of one or more syllables at the beginning of the names in each group a common element, presumably for pedagogical reasons, rather than as showing evidence of any principle of classification, or definite etymological scheme.

The lists are fully worked out in transliteration, and duplicates are tabulated. Translations are given as far as possible.

No. 2, "Lists of Akkadian Personal Names," includes 67 autographed texts. All names are given in transliteration, the Akkadian names being accompanied by translations. Separate glossaries cover the Akkadian and Amorite name elements. The value of the transliterations is considerably enhanced by an accompanying tabulation of name elements as they occur in the same or in other combinations over the entire Semitic field.

The register includes 351 Amorite and 1,234 Akkadian names, but owing to the damaged state of the tablets approximately one-third of the Amorite names are either incomplete or illegible. Over a tenth of the Akkadian names are similarly affected. Part 3 is to contain similar lists of Sumerian names. Dr. Chiera is to be congratulated for his skilful and interesting treatment of these texts.

Volumes X and XII of the same series are by Professor St. Langdon, formerly of the Museum staff. Volume X consists of three parts. No. 1, "The Sumerian Paradise, the Flood and Fall of Man," has been previously reviewed in this *Journal*.

No. 2, "Sumerian Liturgical Texts" (pp. 97+62 plates, 1917) is a respectable sized volume in itself. The texts of this publication are difficult, not

merely because they are diverse in character and written in Sumerian, but also because of the fragmentary condition of a large part of the material. The editor has very commendably undertaken to elucidate the text, but proceeds to do so by seeking to support certain theses from this material. One proposition is that these texts incidentally corroborate his rendering of Vol. X, No. 1, "The Sumerian Paradise, etc." His main thesis is that the texts here published confirm and extend our knowledge of the deification and worship of Sumerian kings. Another thesis posits a great messianic hope in Sumerian times. All of these statements deserve attention. So far as the last is concerned, a careful reading of pages 106-8 makes it clear that the editor is using the term "messianic" in a totally different sense from that employed in the classic usage of the word in Old Testament prophecy. It is virtually the sense that makes every reigning king a messiah or a potential messiah.

As to the cult of deified kings, the exact reasons why some Sumerian kings were deified while still alive, others after they were dead, and still others not at all are not yet sufficiently clear, although the facts are reasonably certain. The phenomena are not at all strange in the history of religion, and the processes leading thereto are comprehensible. How extensive this particular cult was in Babylonia is another matter that requires considerably more investigation, and, specifically, how far the texts under consideration have a bearing on this practice and the cult of Babylonian religion in general requires careful weighing.

Text No. 1 is entitled "An Epical Poem on the Origin of Sumerian Civilization." The text is only a small fragment of a tablet. The reverse is admittedly illegible. The obverse Cols. II and III, ll. 1-7, furnish no sure context. Magan, Meluhha, Dilmun (possibly), Nippur, Eridu, and Sumer are mentioned. Whether Col. III contains a reference to a ship or a flood is doubtful. Col. III, 9 ff. are occupied with the praise of a shrine of Enlil, perhaps in Nippur. That the text contains anything specifically about the origin of Sumerian civilization does not appear. Text No. 6 is called a "Liturgical Hymn Concerning Ur-Engur." The obverse as far as Col. II, l. 20, is too broken to be sure of the meaning. The rest of Col. II commemorates a victory of Ur-Engur. Col. III, l. 20, enumerates the gifts and votive offerings which the king made to the gods as a result. Col. IV is very obscure but seems to deal in part at least with the king's dedication of his offerings. The hymn deals with Ur-Engur as subject rather than object.

Text No. 7 forms the single exception in this volume of a text not from the Nippur collection. It is from the University of Dublin, and entitled "A Liturgical Hymn to Dungi." A poem in laudation of the king it is, but in spite of the divine epithet used of the king, the praise is to a king, not a god. The evidence for a cult of Dungi from this text is exceedingly elusive.

No. 8, called a liturgical hymn to Libit-Ishtar (?), etc., is a composition, so far as it is legible, in commemoration of the founding and decoration of a temple. No. 9, "Liturgy of the Cult of Ishme-Dagan," is a prayer of Ishme-Dagan for a prosperous reign. No. 10, "Hymn of Samsu-iluna to Statues of Lions and His Own Statue," is a poem in dedication of the statues above by the king. No. 14, "Liturgy of the Cult of Ishme-Dagan," is a prayer offered for Ishme-Dagan. No. 16, "A Psalm to a Mythical Musical Instrument, etc.," is a composition explaining the nature and function of the *Al* instrument used as an accompaniment by the gods.

The religious and liturgical character of this volume on the whole is very pronounced. The texts thus made available to scholars are many and important. The work of editing the same and giving a first rendering is prodigious and deserves all praise. The editor's opinion about the ultimate religious character of the texts is a secondary matter so long as such opinions do not interfere with accuracy of text or fidelity of rendering. The last point is the most serious and in the case of Sumerian texts can only be surely obviated by many approaches to the material in hand from many different angles. If the cathedral atmosphere which permeates the interpretation of this volume does not always square with the material, we may venture to say that there is about the texts at least the religious fervency of the nonconformist chapel.

Vol. X, No. 3 (*The Epic of Gilgamesh* by Stephen Langdon, 1917), is devoted to the text and the interpretation of a tablet originally carrying 240 lines of text, that was purchased by the University Museum in 1914. The tablet is supposed to hail from the ancient city of Erech, and it contains an early copy of a fragment of the Gilgamesh epic. The first column begins at Tablet I, Col. V, l. 25, of the Assyrian version and duplicates that version as far as Tablet I, Col. VI, l. 29. This still leaves five columns of our tablet which give a section of the epic almost entirely unknown before. The most interesting section is perhaps Rev. Cols. II and III. Unfortunately the opening lines in both are too badly mutilated to grasp the precise situation. In Col. II there is preparation for a struggle, and in Col. III Enkidu and Gilgamesh fight. The objective is not clear. The editor's rendering of lines 11 and 16 which makes the heroes fight each other is questionable. Certainly Langdon's assumption that the *motif* here is the renunciation of woman's love in the presence of a great undertaking is exceedingly tenuous. This requires Enkidu to play a rôle he was very ill fitted for. Moreover both Enkidu's previous experience with the heirodule and the outcome of this supposed conflict of the heroes would seem to teach just the opposite lesson from that which Enkidu is supposed to be championing.

The text is followed by two photographic reproductions of the tablet, and this Part is supplied with a glossary to Parts 2 and 3. The importance of this tablet warrants the devotion of a separate Part of the volume to it alone.

Vol. XII, No. 1 (*Sumerian Grammatical Texts*, pp. 44+68 plates, 1917), is in part a continuation of the material of Vol. XI. It is, however, a highly miscellaneous collection, that only by a somewhat violent use of language can be classified as "grammatical texts." Indeed the title gives no adequate idea of its contents. This is not merely because of the variety of grammatical material, but also by reason of other highly diversified kinds of literature included. The vast majority are unbaked school-exercise texts, of grammar grade rather than grammatical in character. Indeed "School Exercise Texts" would have been a much more accurate title. For the sake of clearness, more attention to this feature in the interpretation would have been helpful. This applies especially to No. 7 and helps to explain its heterogeneous material, perhaps also the obscurities in No. 13 are to be accounted for from the same cause. Numbers 5, 7, 9, 11, and 54 are primarily lexicographical. In addition the list includes a Sumerian business document No. 22; a letter of the Cassite period, No. 24; a hymn to Shamash, No. 25; and a Neo-Babylonian contract, No. 44. The material is thus of the greatest variety. Of the purely school exercises, the Sumerian form of S<sup>b</sup> and the fragments of Sumerian laws are striking examples. The supplemental sections which aid in restoring lacunae in previously published tablets are noteworthy, cf. Nos. 16 and 17. In the description of tablets the terms "pupil" and "scholar" are used interchangeably. At any rate the "scholars" of Nippur are not to blame for the ambiguity.

These three volumes will have done much to deepen the sense of reality concerning both the processes and the extent of learning of the scholars of Nippur. Those who have produced these works as well as those who have made them possible are benefactors of their kind.

LEROY WATERMAN

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN